

1894.
NEW ZEALAND.

WEBSTER'S LAND-CLAIMS.

[In continuation of A.—4, 1893.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

(New Zealand, No. 20.)

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 18th April, 1893.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your telegrams of the 27th March and 15th instant, in reply to mine of the 11th March, respecting the land-claims of Mr. W. Webster in New Zealand.

I enclose for your information, and for that of your Government, a copy of a letter from the Foreign Office, with copy of a note from the United States Minister at this Court, on the subject of these claims, which will explain the telegram which I had the honour of addressing to you.

Governor the Right Hon. the Earl of Glasgow,
G.C.M.G., &c.

I have, &c.,
RIPON.

[Enclosures.]

Mr. T. H. SANDERSON to the UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE, Colonial Office.

SIR,—

Foreign Office, 25th February, 1893.

With reference to my letter of the 23rd August, 1892, respecting the land-claim of Mr. W. Webster, in New Zealand, I am directed by the Earl of Rosebery to transmit copy of a further note from the United States Minister at this Court, requesting that the decision arrived at by Her Majesty's Government with regard to this case may be reconsidered.

Lord Rosebery would suggest that the attention of the Government of New Zealand should be again called to this matter, and that they should be requested by telegraph to forward as soon as possible their observations on the report of the United States Senate Committee, which was communicated to them in August last.

On the receipt of those observations it may be desirable to consult the Law Officers of the Crown as to the answer to be returned to the fresh representation now made by the United States Government, and generally as to the course to be adopted.

Mr. Lincoln has requested that the matter may have Lord Rosebery's personal attention. This would in any case have been given to it, but the request implies that the United States Government are not likely to drop the claim unless either a conclusive reply can be furnished, or some method of impartial investigation proposed.

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

I have, &c.,
T. H. SANDERSON.

Mr. ROBERT LINCOLN to the Right Hon. the Earl of ROSEBERY.

MY LORD,—

Legation of the United States, London, 9th February, 1893.

With reference to the note of the Marquess of Salisbury, of 18th August, 1891, relative to the claim of Mr. Webster growing out of his alleged wrongful deprivation of lands owned by him in New Zealand, I have again the honour, under the instructions of the Secretary of State, to bring the subject of a consideration of Mr. Webster's claim to the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and to say that my Government are unable to admit the validity of the ground upon which was put, in the above-mentioned note, the declination of Her Majesty's Government to consider the claim as that of a United States citizen, entitled to the protection of the principle as to land-claims of foreigners in New Zealand, which was announced by Lord Aberdeen to Mr. Everett on 10th February, 1844, as that which was to control the administration of the then newly-organized colony. The declination I have referred to was based upon the proposition as stated, that Mr. Webster voluntarily accepted the conditions imposed upon him by Governor Fitzroy in 1841, and submitted his claim as a British subject under the colonial ordinance of that year; and it is my duty to represent to your Lordship that, in the view of my Government, this proposition is not supported by the uncontroverted facts in the case.